

Martyred Armenia

The Only Christian Armenian Girl to
Escape at Last from the Murdering
Turks and Kurds and the Wicked
Harems of the Sultan's Bloodthirsty Officials
Reveals, for the First Time, the Details of the
Wholesale Massacres and Seizure of Thousands
of Young Women, Which She Witnessed



"This was a favorite pastime of the Zaptieths of the Euphrates. They had commanded the girl to submit quietly, and she had fought them. To punish her they buried her that way and tortured her. Her screams amused them greatly."

screams from the other side. Once the Zaptieths on the raft taking them across broke into a loud guffaw. The oarsmen steered the raft so as to escape two floating objects, and it was these which amused the Zaptieths. Mrs. Roth looked and saw the bodies of two of her girls floating down the river from where the screams came.

"Look—look there," shouted a laughing Zaptieth; "two more Christians!"

On the other side Mrs. Roth found those who were left of her sixty or more pupils—only seventeen. Their lives were saved only because the Zaptieths and soldiers had not gotten around to them yet. They were, too, the least pretty of the original party. Mrs. Roth took them all back to Malatia, where the Vali insisted that she house them. They were living there in constant fear of being taken away again when I was taken from the city.

Students at the School of Mme. Was One of Those Whom to the Turks. From a manian Artist. The girl Has Been Lost.

It was said by those who knew while I was kept in Malatia that Mrs. Roth refused to receive Eimen Effendi when the German consular agent called upon her after her return with her surviving pupils. It is said Mrs. Roth sent word to him that she was no longer

German, and would ask no protection except that which she could buy with gold, liras as long as she obtained them from her relatives at home.

In every open space in the city and in every empty building Armenian refugees were camped, hungry, foot-sore and dying, with little food or water. In all our company there were not ten loaves of bread when we entered the city. When we asked at the wells of Turks for water we were spat at, and if soldiers were near the Turks would call them to drive us away. Each day thousands of those who had been waiting for orders were taken away, and each day thousands of others from the north came into the city.

Some of the men with our party finally led us to a great building which had been a barracks, but in which many thousands of Christians had taken refuge. The others already there made room for us. It was evening when we arrived, and no bread was brought us by the Turks until morning. We seldom ventured out on the streets, for Turkish boys and Kurds and Arabs thronged the streets and threw stones or sticks at us, or in the case of girls as young as I, carried them into Turkish shops or low houses and there outraged them.

When we had passed the second day in Malatia I could rest no longer without seeking my mother—hoping that she and the Armenians of Tchamesh-Gedsak might be among the other refugees. I went into the street at night and went from place to place where the exiles were herded. Nowhere could I find familiar faces—the people of my own city.

When morning came I could not find my way back to the building I had left. Morning comes quickly in the midst of the plains, and soon it was light, and I was in a part of the city where there were no refugees.

The streets of Malatia are very narrow, and there are few byways. My bare feet were tired from walking about through the night on cobblestones and pavements.

I felt very old and worn out—not as if I really were but little over fourteen. But I knew I would soon be carried into one of these Turkish houses and lost, perhaps forever, if soldiers or Turkish gendarmes should catch me at large. I hid in a little arway.

Suddenly I realized that I was hugging the walls of a house over which hung the American flag. A feeling of relief came over me. The American flag is very beautiful to the eyes of all Armenians! For many years it has been to my people the promise of peace and happiness. We had heard so much of the wonderful country it represented. I have learned to love it now, because I, too, have found safety and friends beneath it.

When the street was clear I left my hiding place and went to the door leading into the house. I rapped, but a group of residents entered the street just then and spied me. They were citizens, not soldiers, but they shouted and started to run at me, recognizing me perhaps from the bits of garments which I had managed to gather to cover my body, as an Armenian.

I screamed and pushed at the door. It opened, and I found myself in the arms of a lady who was coming to let me in.

I was too frightened to explain. The Turks were at the door. I thought I would be carried away. A Turk pushed himself into the narrow room into which the front door opened. Another followed, and they reached their hands out to take me.

The lady, who was not Turkish, stepped in front of me. "What do you want?—Why are you here?" she asked in Turkish. "The girl—we want her. She has escaped," they said.

"You will not take her. You have no authority. You must leave this house. This young woman is my guest."

By now I knew the lady was American. She seemed to be alone in the house. But she was not afraid. The Turks moved as if to take me from her by force. She just straightened up and stood firmly in front of them. "The girl belongs to us. She has run away from the refugees. The Mutassarif has ordered citizens to take escaped refugees into custody. We must have her," said the Turks.

"Your Mutassarif's orders have nothing to do with me. I shall protect the girl with my life. You dare not harm an American!" said the lady. Then the Turks, grumbling among themselves and threatening vengeance, went out. The lady took me in her arms.

She told me she was Miss McLaine, an American missionary. The house was the home of the American consul at Malatia, but he had taken his wife, who was ill, to Harput. Miss McLaine kept the American flag flying while they were gone. She had tried to persuade the officials to be less cruel to the refugees, but could do very little.

Miss McLaine gave me breakfast and bandaged my feet. She tried to comfort me. I told her how I had come there, and she promised to help me find my mother's party if it were near by. Miss McLaine had been a pupil of Dr. Clarence Ussher, the noted American missionary surgeon, of New York, and Mrs. Ussher, both of whom were famous throughout Armenia for their defiance of the Turks and their kindnesses to our people during the massacres at Van. Miss McLaine told me much about Mrs. Ussher, who had saved the lives of many Armenians. Afterward I learned that even while Miss McLaine was telling me of her, that very day, Mrs. Ussher was killed at Van.

Late that day a squad of soldiers came from the Mutassarif to the consul's house and demanded of Miss McLaine that "the girl she was hiding" be given up to them. Miss McLaine again refused to surrender me.

Dr. Clarence D. Ussher, of New York, the Famous American Surgeon, Who Was in Turkey When the Massacres Began, and Who Earned the Love of Armenians for His Defiance of the Turks.

The soldiers declared they had orders to take me by force. Miss McLaine showed them the American flag and warned them. She asked that they take her to the Mutassarif that she might ask his protection for me. To this the soldiers at last agreed, and I was left alone in the house.

When Miss McLaine returned she was crying. The soldiers came with her. The Mutassarif had said I must rejoin the exiles, but that I might be taken to a house where a large company of women who had embraced Mohammedanism were confined with their children. This company, the Mutassarif said, was to be taken away safely and protected until they reached a place selected by the government.

So Miss McLaine could do nothing more for me. She kissed me, and the soldiers led me away to the house where the apostasized women with their children were being kept. Two years after, when I escaped out of the desert, I was told by an American doctor that Miss McLaine had been stricken with illness while caring for Armenians at Malatia and had died.

The apostasized Armenians to whom the soldiers took me were nearly all women from small cities between Malatia and Sivas. In almost every case they had purchased the privilege of becoming Mohammedans from Aziz Bey's officers. I know none of them really had given up Christianity, but they thought they were doing right, as nearly all the women were the mothers of small children who were with them. They wanted to save the lives of their little ones. They did not know what was to become of them, but the boys had promised they would be taken care of by the government in the monastery.

This party of refugees was fed by the Turks—bread, water and coarse cakes. We were not allowed out of the house, but the Turks did not bother us. I soon had occasion to realize that the Mutassarif really had given me at least some protection when he had me join this party.

In some of the companies the men had not been killed and still were with their women. At noon of the fourth day the soldiers gathered all of these into one big party. The Vali wanted them to register, the soldiers said, so allotments of land could be made to them at their destination in the south. So earnest were the soldiers the men believed them. Many joined the line of their brothers even without putting on their coats, if they still had them. They were marched to the very building in which I had first been quartered, and from which the other refugees had been turned out the night before.

Almost 3,000 men were marched into this building. Outside soldiers took up their station at the doors and windows. Other soldiers then robbed the men of their money and valuables—such as they had saved from Kurds along the road. Then the soldiers killed them, at first with knives, until the bodies had piled up so high the soldiers could not reach survivors without stumbling in blood; then they used their rifles, and killed the rest with volleys of bullets.

That afternoon soldiers visited all the camps of refugees and the houses in which they were quartered and took all children more than five years old. I think there must have been eight or nine thousand of these. The soldiers came even to the house in which I was with the "turned" Armenians, and despite the promises of the Vali took all our boys and girls. When mothers held onto their little ones and begged for them the soldiers would beat them off with rifle butts. "If they die now your God won't be troubled by having to look after them till they grow up," the soldiers said—and always with a brutal laugh.

They took the children to the edge of the city, where a band of Aghja Daghi Kurds were waiting. Here the soldiers gave the children into the keeping of the Kurds, who drove them off toward the Tokma-Su River, just outside the city. The Kurds drove the little ones like a flock of sheep. When a little boy or little girl fell and couldn't walk any further, or cried for mother and father until they were too weak to march, the Kurds would ride over them with their horses and mash them to death. At the river banks they drove all the little boys into the river. The larger girls, those from 8 to 10 or 11 years, they took aside, and then the rest of the girls were thrown into the river. The larger ones were taken into the hills to be sold to farmers or raised by the Kurds themselves to be sold as slaves later.

That night all the refugees in Malatia were told they would be put on the road for Diyarbekir to-morrow. All night long the soldiers ran wild among them, all restraint being thrown aside. The soldiers had orders, they said, to kill all the aged women and the sick ones. Some soldiers came into the house where my company was and picked out twenty-nine women who were very old and who had been helped along on the road by their daughters or younger relatives. They killed these where they found them, and left their bodies for us to carry out of the house.

Three soldiers had massacred so many women their clothes were dripping with blood, and they were proud of this. They dipped their hands in the blood of the women they killed and playfully slapped each other in the face, laughing gayly at the red marks their fingers left.

In the morning all the refugees were ordered to take the road. My company, the "turned" Armenians, were put at the head of the column. We were to be protected, the soldiers said, by the Vali's command, and so were to have a special guard of soldiers with us. No soldiers were sent with the rest of the companies—Kurds waited at the outskirts of the city to take the place of the usual soldier escort.

(Continued Next Sunday)



Armenian Refugees in the Streets of Malatia, Waiting to Be Taken Into the Deserts Beyond the Town. Nearly All Were Killed.

